

IN THE CLAIMS

1-10. (cancelled)

11. (currently amended) A method for manufacturing a bearing element comprising the steps of:

forming a plurality of layers from a combination of a first material and a second material, wherein a first of ~~said the~~ layers includes an exterior surface and an interior surface, the first layer formed from a plurality of materials comprising at least one of polytetrafluoroethylene fibers, and at least one of glass fibers, and carbon fibers, and combinations thereof, wherein the exterior surface includes a higher concentration of polytetrafluoroethylene fibers and the interior surface includes a higher concentration of the at least one of glass fibers and carbon fibers, and wherein a second of ~~said the~~ layers is formed against the first layer and is formed from a ~~single-material comprising at least one of glass fibers and carbon fibers,~~ such that the first layer comprises the first material, the second layer comprises the second material, and the third layer comprises the first material and wherein a third of the layers includes an exterior surface and an interior surface, the first layer formed from a plurality of materials comprising polytetrafluoroethylene fibers, and at least one of glass fibers and carbon fibers, wherein the exterior surface includes a higher concentration of polytetrafluoroethylene fibers and the interior surface includes a higher concentration of the at least one of glass fibers and carbon fibers;

forming the bearing element from the plurality of layers, wherein each layer is formed from at least one of weaving materials and braiding materials;

plasma etching each of the bearing element plurality of layers to facilitate enhancing bonding between adjacent layers; and

impregnating each of the bearing element plurality of layers with a polyimide resin comprising polytetrafluoroethylene powder.

12-13. (canceled)

14. (currently amended) A method in accordance with ~~Claim 13~~ Claim 11 wherein said step of forming the plurality of layers further comprises the steps of:

- forming the first layer from a woven mat of the first material;
- forming the second layer from a woven mat of the second material; and
- forming the third layer from a woven mat of the first material.

15. (currently amended) A method in accordance with ~~Claim 13~~ Claim 11 wherein said step of forming the plurality of layers further comprises the steps of:

- forming the first layer from a braid of the first material;
- forming the second layer from a braid of the second material; and
- forming the third layer from a braid of the first material.

16. (cancelled)

17. (currently amended) A method in accordance with ~~Claim 13~~ Claim 11 wherein:

- the first layer comprises polytetrafluoroethylene fibers and glass fibers;
- the second layer comprises glass fibers;
- the third layer comprises polytetrafluoroethylene fibers and glass fibers; and
- the glass fibers are coated with an epoxy sizing.

18. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 17 wherein carbon fibers are substituted for the glass fibers.

19. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 17 wherein quartz fibers are substituted for the glass fibers.

20. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 17 wherein a silane sizing is substituted for the epoxy sizing.